



# Montgomery County Council

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**For Immediate Release**

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***Acts against fronts for prostitution while protecting legitimate therapists...***

## **COUNCIL APPROVES LEGISLATION TO LICENSE MESSAGE THERAPISTS, BUSINESSES & OWNERS**

The Montgomery County Council today unanimously approved legislation that will require county licenses for massage therapists not already licensed by the state, as well as for massage businesses and their owners operating in the county.

The bill's overall purpose is to separate true massage parlors from businesses that advertise the availability of massage as a front for prostitution. Currently, the state of Maryland only regulates certified massage therapists and practitioners.

"This legislation gives our county Department of Health and Human Services and our Police more tools to effectively enforce laws against prostitution," said Council President Blair Ewing. "It does so while protecting the rights of legitimate massage therapists to earn a living and support their families."

"We are supplementing the limited state regulation of massage practitioners with a more comprehensive approach," said Councilmember Derick Berlage. "Fronts for prostitution posing as massage parlors are threats to public health and to the economic revitalization of such areas as Wheaton and Silver Spring."

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